

MAY 2006 WEATHER SUMMARY

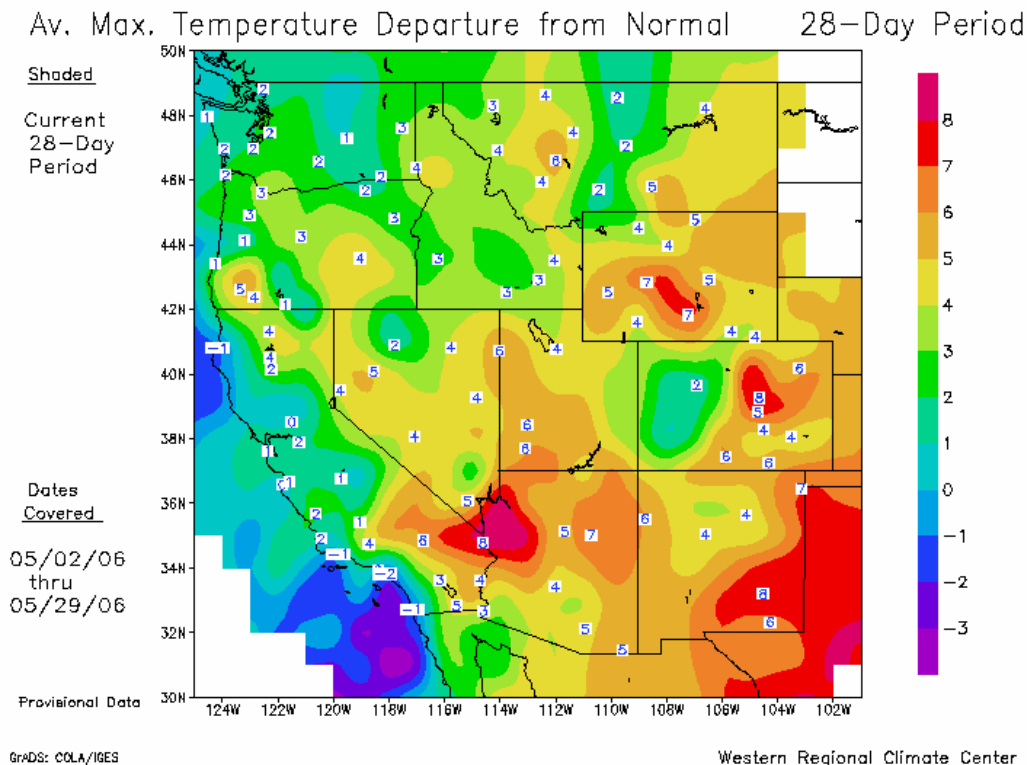
RIVERSIDE FIRE WEATHER CENTER

INTRODUCTION

A Pacific trough brought below normal temperatures during the first week of May. A ridge of high pressure over the southwestern states dominated the rest of the month with above normal temperatures. During the last three weeks of the month, there were only two brief periods of near to below normal temperatures. Most of the precipitation came on May 21st – May 22nd when a low pressure area moved inland over Southern California. Otherwise, there was little to no precipitation during the month. Winds were mainly southerly with no strong offshore wind events during the month.

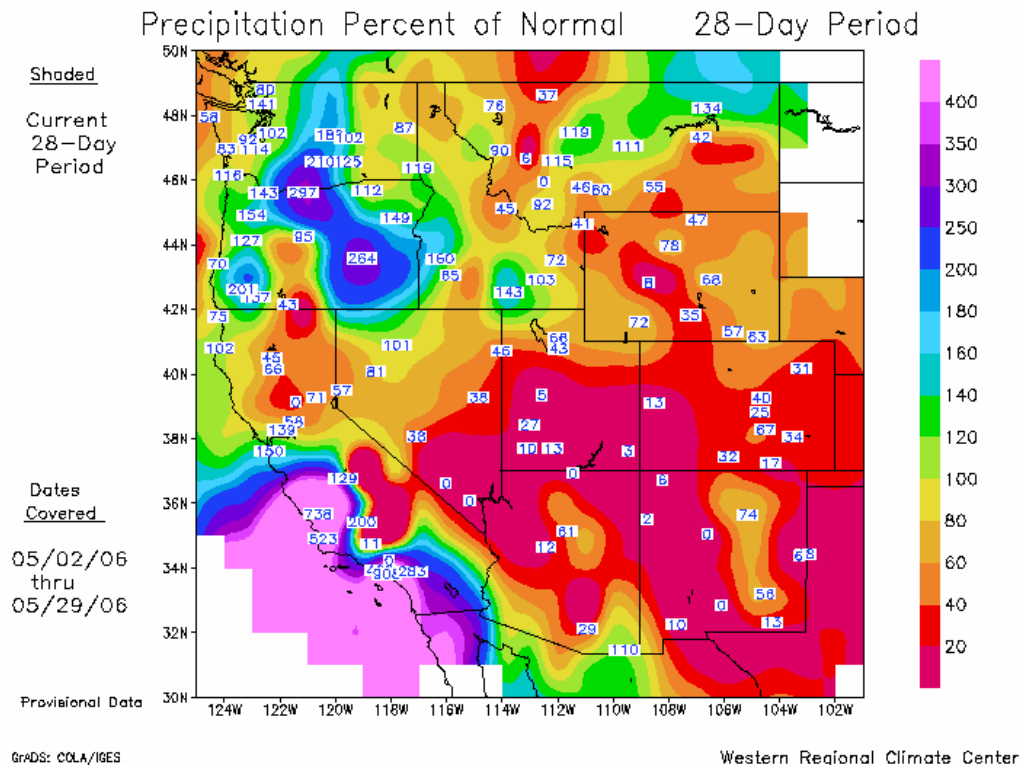
TEMPERATURES

A Pacific trough brought below normal temperatures during the first week of May. Most of the rest of the month was dominated by above normal temperatures as a ridge of high pressure sat over the southwestern states. During the last three weeks of the month, there was only one low pressure area and one Pacific trough that brought two brief periods of near to below normal temperatures. Across Southern California, many valley locations had maximum temperatures in the mid 80s to mid 90s with the ridge of high pressure and 70s to low 80s with the Pacific troughs and low pressure area. Normally, the valley locations of Southern California are in the upper 70s to low 80s the entire month. For the month, maximum temperatures ranged from 2 degrees below normal over some South Coast locations to 8 degrees above normal over some eastern Desert locations. There were no record temperatures set at Riverside during the month.



PRECIPITATION

The only widespread significant precipitation during May occurred as a low pressure area moved down the coast from Northern California and inland over Southern California on May 21st- May 22nd. Most locations received between a quarter inch and half an inch of rainfall with some Central Coast locations receiving 1 to 2 inches of rainfall. Desert locations received less rainfall with some areas getting no rainfall. This was a warm storm with snow falling only over the peaks. Besides some isolated afternoon thunderstorms over the Sierra and northern deserts there was little or no precipitation the rest of the month. Riverside set a record daily rainfall on May 22nd with 0.41 inches. Riverside received 0.41 inches of rainfall for the month, when normally they receive 0.27 inches.



WINDS

Winds were mostly southerly the entire month. Southerly afternoon winds were mainly between 10 and 20 mph. However, as the low pressure area moved onshore May 21st – May 22nd, southerly winds over some mountain and desert locations were 15 to 30 mph with gusts in the 40s and 50s. There were no strong offshore wind events during the month.

FIRES

There was not much fire activity during most of the month, but initial attack activity increased toward the later part of the month as temperatures rose and humidity decreased. However, the two largest fires occurred near the middle of the month. There were seven fires this month as reported by the 209's, of which two were large fires. Both of the two large fires were in the CDF FKU area. The Torch fire west of Colinga consumed 4,500 acres and the Hwy 33 fire in Kings County consumed 4,000 acres.

CONCLUSION

Overall, May had above normal temperatures and near to above normal precipitation. Winds were mainly southerly with no strong offshore wind events during the month. There were no strong offshore wind events during the month.